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ABS	Transcribes joint statement by Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Chinese Vice Premier Qian Qichen following signing of agreements on missile proliferation and production of fissile materials

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesman

For Immediate Release

October 4, 1994

REMARKS BY  
SECRETARY OF STATE WARREN CHRISTOPHER  
AND  
CHINESE VICE PREMIER & FOREIGN MINISTER QIAN QICHEN

Following The Signing Of  
Joint US-China Statement On Missile Proliferation  
and  
Joint US-China Statement On Stopping Production  
Of Fissile Materials For Nuclear Weapons

Department of State  
Washington, D.C.

SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER: Good afternoon. Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen's trip is closing on a very positive note. I'm pleased to announce today that the United States and China have reached important agreements to help curb the proliferation of missiles and the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. Stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction is a strategic priority for President Clinton's Administration. Today's agreements are another advance toward achieving that objective. They also represent a vital element of our relationship with China, a nuclear power and a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council.

First, on the question of missile nonproliferation, the United States and China have agreed to a step-by-step approach to resolve their differences on the export of missiles under the Missile Technology Control Regime, MTCR. As a first step, the United States will move to lift the sanctions it imposed against China in August of 1993, for the transfer of missile parts to Pakistan. Once the sanctions are lifted, China has agreed not to export ground-to-ground missiles covered by the MTCR Agreement.

In effect, this communique today goes beyond the MTCR requirements. It represents a global and verifiable ban on Chinese exports of missiles capable of the range of at least 300 kilometers and a payload of at least 500 kilograms. This is a very important step forward and I urge you not to let the complexity of it blind you to the achievement that's resulted here today.

This agreement also resolves a previous difference of opinion between the United States and China on the interpretation of MTCR. Under the terms of this agreement, China has now accepted the MTCR definition of a missile's inherent capability. That means that any missile that has the inherent capability to be adapted to meet the MTCR thresholds through modification is also within the control of the regime. Both of our countries have reaffirmed our respective commitments to the MTCR guidelines and its parameters. As a second step in this connection, the United States and China have also agreed to hold further in-depth discussions on MTCR, including discussions of China's possible MTCR membership in the near future.

Now, on a second subject, that is fissile material production, the United States and China have agreed to work together to promote a global and verifiable ban on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. This agreement will enable us to advance our shared goal of stopping the production of nuclear weapons materials in states that are on the threshold of nuclear weapons development. It also strengthens our larger shared commitment to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

As influential members of the international community, the United States and China have a special obligation to cooperate in promoting peace and security. These two agreements are good examples of the benefits that cooperation can bring, and I'm gratified that we were able to reach them. I also want to thank the Vice Premier and Foreign Minister for his visit here today. I think the talks that have taken place in connection with human rights as well as the talks we've had on nonproliferation are a reflection of a good degree of progress in our relationship; and I'm grateful to you, Mr. Minister, for your important leadership role in these achievements. Thank you very much.

VICE PREMIER & FOREIGN MINISTER QIAN: (Through Interpreter)  
Just now I signed with Secretary Christopher two important agreements: one on nonproliferation, the other on the cut-off of fissile material production.

On the first subject, that is nuclear nonproliferation, it is our consistent position that China does not engage in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the missiles outside the MTCR. In 1991, China and the United States had discussions on this issue. However, due to the sanctions applied against China by the United States, this issue was not resolved at that time. In March 1992, after the United States lifted its sanctions against China, China made that commitment. Now we are reaffirming our commitment made in March 1992.

Later, in August 1993, the United States reimposed sanctions against China, and our two countries had a long discussion on this issue. Today we have reached agreement on this issue; that is, after the lifting of the sanctions imposed on China by the United States in August 1993, China reaffirms its commitment to MTCR Guidelines and parameters. So, after long-term discussions between our two sides, our two sides have now resolved this issue. We are very pleased about this.

On the second issue, that is the stopping of the production of fissile materials, both China and the United States are nuclear countries, even though the nuclear arsenal of the United States is much bigger than that of China. Still, China is ready to work with the rest of the international community to promote the earliest achievement of a convention on the stopping of fissile materials among the nuclear countries. We hope to see an early and smooth completion of this process.

The conclusion of these two agreements between our two countries will contribute to the development of Sino-American relations. It will also play a positive role in promoting the global nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the stopping of the production of fissile materials. Therefore, it will also contribute to world peace and stability.

I wish to thank Secretary Christopher for the good arrangements for my visit. We have had useful discussions, and I wish to express our thanks for the warm reception accorded to us by our host. Thank you. (Applause)

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, does this now mean that the United States will license the remaining satellites to be launched on Chinese rockets?

SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER: No, that's no part of the commitment here. The commitment is only to lift the Category II sanctions which were imposed in 1993 against China.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, can you tell us whether this agreement goes beyond the pledge that China made to Secretary of State Baker in November of 1991?

SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER: Well, it certainly goes beyond the MTCR requirements, which I believe was the emit of that pledge. To simplify it as well as one can and, as I say, there are some complexities about this that are inherent. But this is a global and verifiable ban on Chinese exports of all missiles within the parameters, that is within the 300 kilometer range, at least 300 kilometers and a payload of at least 500 kilograms.

The fact that it's a global and verifiable ban, not simply a presumption, goes beyond MTCR and is a very important step forward. We have people here who are experts on the MTCR but MTCR, as you know, is basically a very strong presumption but it is not an automatic outlawing. The agreement reached today is a global and verifiable ban, and that's a very important difference.

QUESTION: The MTCR covers missile parts or components as well. Does this?

SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER: Yes, this does as well. Both sides have reaffirmed their commitment to the MTCR guidelines and its parameters on equipment as well.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, when do think it will be the appropriate time for lifting all sanctions imposed on China?

SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER: That's a completely different subject. As the relationships mature, as we watch over time in various aspects of the development of our relationships, I think those issues will arise and be clarified.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, how is this agreement verifiable?

SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER: We have the means to determine whether or not there will be sales of that character. I have little question that that can be done. I also think that the Chinese commitment in this regard is one that's not ambiguous. Thank you very much.

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